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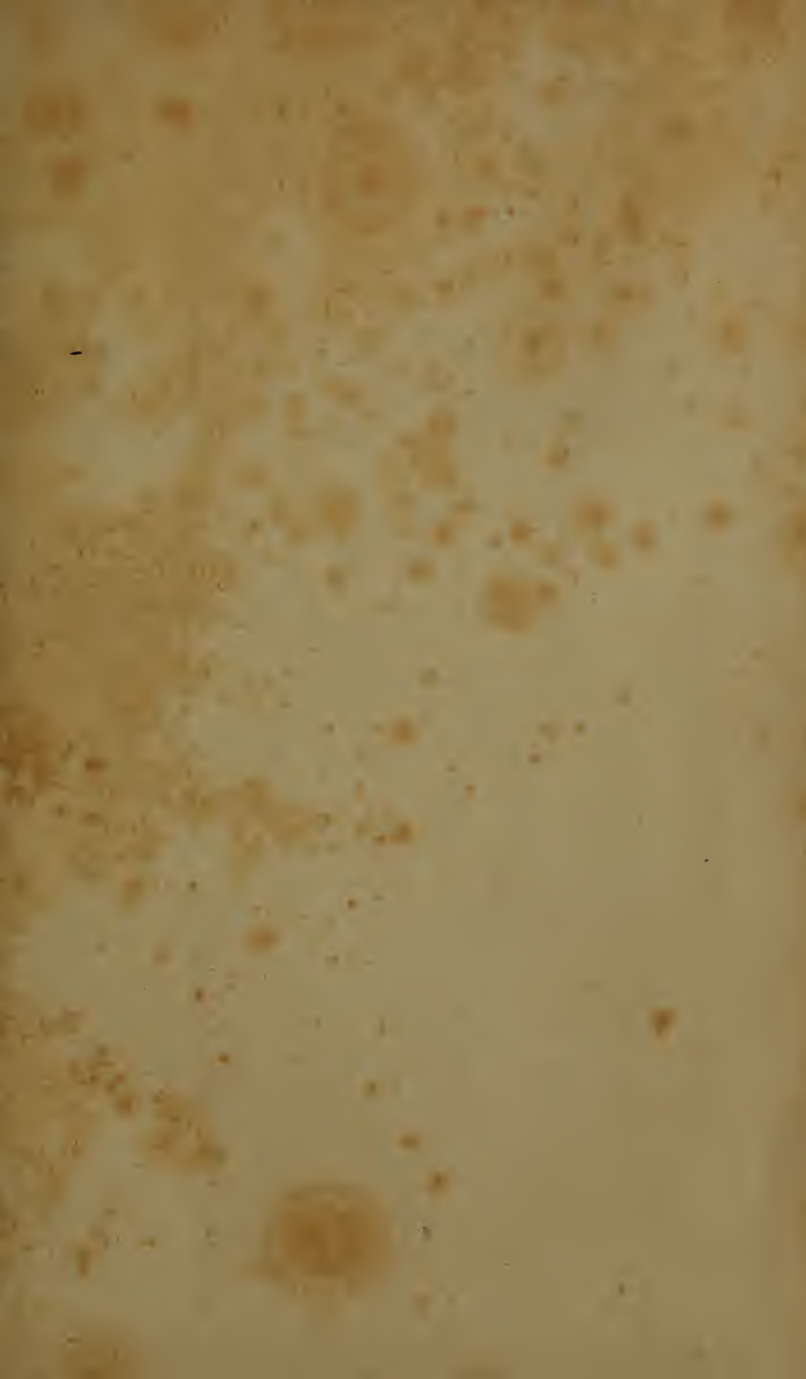
JANE BAILEY.

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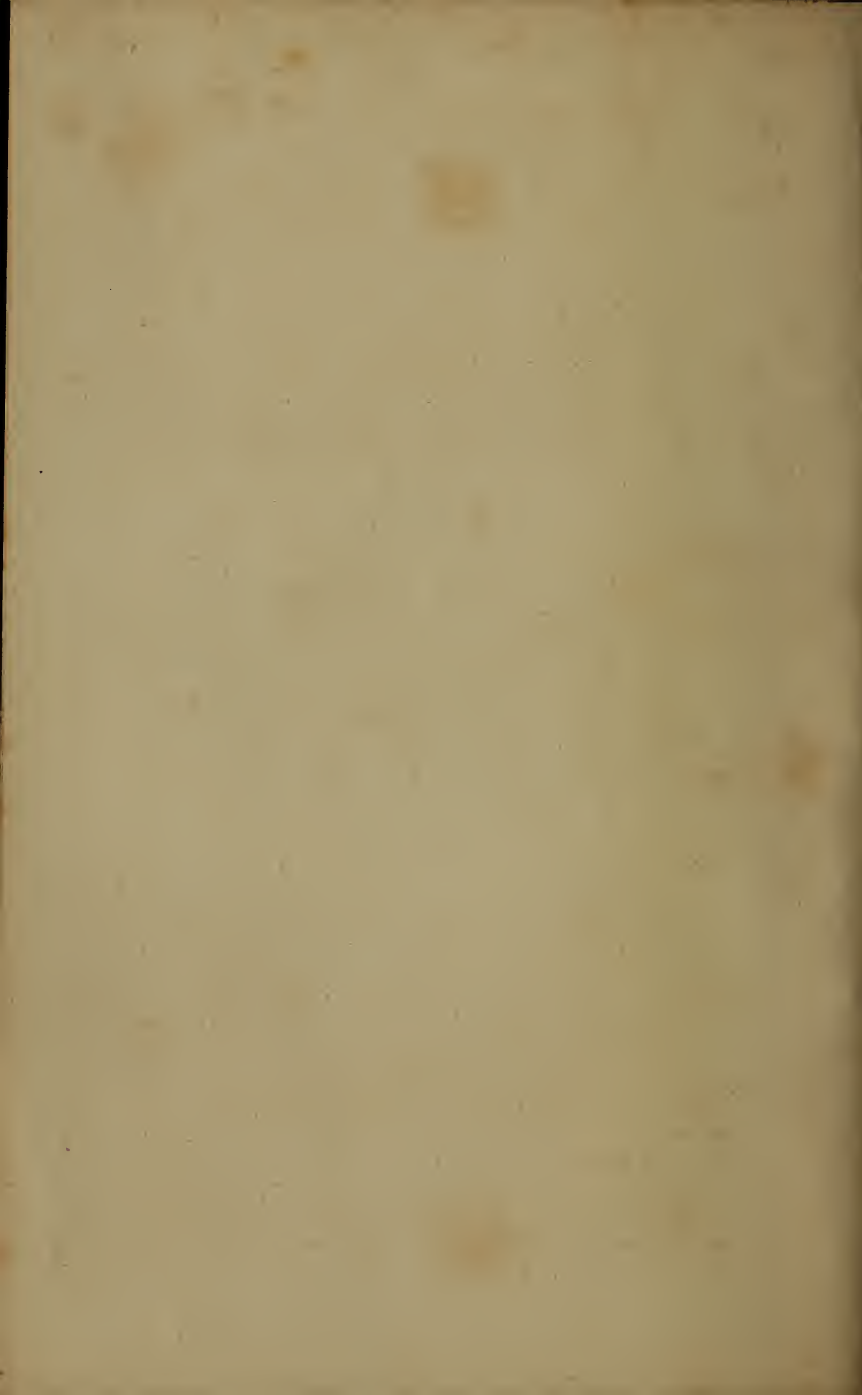
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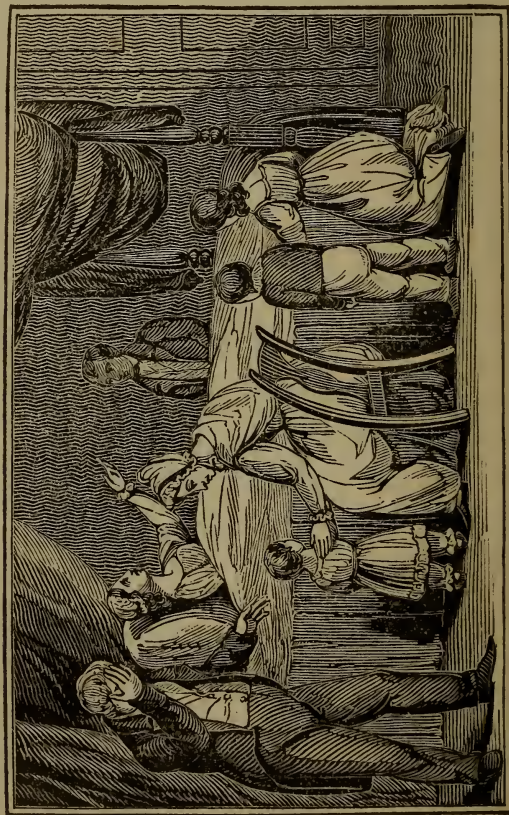












‘I shall meet you all in heaven.’—[Page 58.]



Deposited in Mass: Court  
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JANE BAILEY:

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See Vol. 10, p. 65.

OR

Recollections of a Home Missionary.  
Rec? at Dept of State  
April 16. 1835.

'The chamber where the youthful saint expires,  
Though fraught with grief,  
And dark with death's dull shadows,  
Is still refulgent with the light of heaven.'



Boston :

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## JANE BAILEY.

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IF it be true, as a poet has said, 'That life is long which answers life's great end,' the biography of childhood furnishes many a happy illustration of the truth. It matters little, individually, whether this probationary period is brief or protracted, if it do but secure the main design—eternal life. In this respect it may be safely said, 'all is well that ends well.' It is important, however, that life itself should furnish something worthy of remembrance, previous to the last closing scene. Otherwise, we could know but little concerning the character of the dead, since changes that take place in sickness often prove exceedingly deceptive. Many persons, who when reduced by disease seem to have become decidedly pious, have after their recovery manifested no evidence whatever of such a change. This remark is intended to guard against an erroneous impression, that there is

always ground to authorize a hope in favor of such as have expressed on their death-bed an interest in religion. It is a critical point to determine in such cases, the reality of conversion ; so much so, at least, that children should be taught not to place too much reliance on the sentiments of the dying. Not but that there are cases of genuine conviction and conversion at the very close of life ; still, as a general rule, if we would gain evidence of their piety who have gone the way of all the earth, we are to look for the proofs of it at an earlier period than death. It should be written therefore, on the first page and on the last page of every book designed for the religious benefit of children, that the time of health and activity is the favored season in which to secure the welfare of the soul. Nay, *now*, whether sick or well, old or young, busy or at leisure—‘now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.’ With these remarks, I introduce the narrative of Jane Bailey.

Capt. Joseph A. Bailey, the father of Jane, was a native of Wales, who came to this country in early life. He was married in Boston, and settled at Dartmouth, Mass. Dartmouth is a

sea-port town, bordering on Buzzard's Bay, having a convenient harbor, and commanding a beautiful view of the Atlantic. This was the birth-place and residence of Jane; and, for several years, the residence of her biographer. The facts he relates, were such as fell under his own observation, or were collected from her parents, in whose family he resided. In presenting these, it may be proper to premise, that nothing more need be expected than has been read before in similar histories. But, as every redeemed soul is a gem in the Saviour's crown, and as every example of early piety tends to influence others to the exercise of 'like precious faith,' it deserves to be recorded, to the praise of God, and for the good of the young, that such have lived, and died in the triumphs of christian hope.

Jane was born August 30th, 1816—and died at the age of thirteen years and three months. Of the first several years of her life there is nothing particularly noticeable, except that she was the child of hopefully pious parents, and of course the subject of religious instruction and many prayers.



What a privilege is it, to enjoy from infancy the benefit of Christian education? What a blessing, to have a praying father, and a praying mother; and thus to be nurtured as in the very lap of piety?

At the period referred to, however, the father, being a shipmaster, was most of his time upon the mighty deep. Yet there, doubtless, as his mind reverted to home and its endearments, and his eye surveyed the wonders of Almighty Power, as seen in the swelling ocean and the glowing firmament, he offered many a fervent petition in behalf of the loved ones he had left behind. What!—it may be asked—a sailor pray? A sailor? Yes. A seaman, when converted, is converted indeed! Whatever he does, he does in earnest. Nor is he dead to the kindly charities of life. Would to Heaven, that many a family, in our inland towns, could witness the sentiments of affection and piety, which are manifested often by this interesting class of our fellow men. Were I to describe one of the most grateful scenes in all the experience of social life, it should be that of a pious mariner returned from sea, reciprocating

the greetings of his long-left family, and leading in their devotions at the domestic altar. The child that participates in such a scene, is surely blest with the prayers of an absent father, whenever his Bethel is upon the billows, and his duty there.

How precious too, must be a mother's fidelity under circumstances like these. How closely do her little ones cling to her heart, and how often are they borne in remembrance at the throne of grace. Such, it is believed, was the favored lot of Jane Bailey.

But, the dearest mother may die ;—and thus was it with her. At about the age of ten years, she was called to mourn this heavy loss. It is needless to say, what a change was occasioned by this event. A motherless child is always an object of peculiar sympathy ; and the more so, in a case like this, where so much is depending on *maternal* influence. It is obvious, therefore, that the tendency of this bereavement was to cast a deep shade over the future character and prospects of the afflicted child. *She* might not appreciate it, in its moral results, however deeply depressed at the moment ; but

others could sorrow for her, for reasons beyond those for which she sorrowed for herself. With all her weeping at the death of a kind mother, little did she know the extent of her loss.

Yet our heavenly Father, who taketh care of those that are ignorant of their own wants, graciously provided in the present emergency. Yes, happily for Jane, the place of a mother was in due time supplied ; supplied too, by one whose care and devotedness could hardly have been surpassed, if surpassed at all, by her first fond mother.

Children are apt to have some strange notions, and oftentimes improper feelings relative to what is termed a '*mother in law.*' They imagine that it implies much less of affectionate attention than they have been accustomed to receive, and an absolute deficiency even of parental kindness. Yet it is by no means strictly so. Let their suspicions of this nature subside, and let their conduct manifest filial trust and affection and obedience ; and they will not fail to experience, in a worthy step-mother, all that they can need, or reasonably desire. Could you have witnessed the untiring attentions, and



patient instructions, and commendable discipline of Mrs. B., you would say that she was to her adopted children, emphatically a *mother*. In the family, in the 'Maternal Association,' in the Sabbath School, and elsewhere, there was the full fervor of a mother's solicitude for the interests of those who were thus specially committed to her care. And it is proper to add, that Jane seemed to acknowledge this, most feelingly, and sincerely. Her deportment at home, from day to day, bespoke a lively sense of obligation on her part, in view of this new and endearing relation.

It is time, however, to speak more particularly of her general character. I need say little about her personal appearance, as that is a subject of neither praise nor censure. True, it was pleasant to witness the beaming of her bright blue eye, and the motions of her graceful form, and the smilings withal of a comely countenance, that betokened cheerfulness and intelligence within; but these are things of capricious character, and things, at best, of very limited duration. Ah, the roses that bloom on the cheek of childhood, and the flashes of wit

and beauty that mingle there, are but treacherous symptoms of what is to come. Activity, and cheerfulness, and the absence of disease, are no sure pledges of continued health. Hence, all parents, and all children, should learn to moderate such expectations. ‘Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.’

Jane, as was intimated above, was a child of unusual sprightliness. At times, indeed, (for she had her faults) her vivacity extended itself to rudeness and frivolity. Her temper, too, was quite too irritable to allow her to be uniformly pleasing, or uniformly happy. She needed the influence of timely restraint, and occasional correction, to tame the turbulence of her passions; yet under steady discipline, she easily became obedient to her parents, and her teacher, and whoever else it was her duty to obey. I may add, moreover, that she was rather given to *pride*. She was too fond of her person, and her appearance, and placed too high a value upon her ascendancy over others. Not more so, how-

ever, than the most of children ; and not more so, perhaps, than the very child that is reading this book. Oh, what a foolish and guilty passion is pride ! What has mortal, of which to boast, above the reptile that crawls at his feet ?

‘ Wherefore should man, frail child of clay,  
Who from the cradle to the shroud,  
Lives but the insect of a day,—  
O, why should mortal man be proud ?

His brightest visions just appear,  
Then vanish, and no more are found ;  
The stateliest pile his pride can rear,  
A breath may level with the ground.

Follies and crimes, a countless sum,  
Are crowded in life’s little span ;  
How ill, alas, does pride become  
That erring, guilty creature, man !

God of my life, Father divine !  
Give me a meek and lowly mind ;  
In modest worth, O let me shine,  
And peace in humble virtue find.’

Though unpleasant to dwell on whatever is censurable in the history of those who ‘rest from their labors,’ it is important in our estimate of human character, to come as near as may be

to the general truth. Let it be repeated, then, that Jane Bailey was far from being faultless. Her faults, of course, were the offspring of an unholy heart; for, like all children, she was a *sinner* by nature, a child of wrath, even as others.

Nor was she insensible to this humiliating fact, as will appear repeatedly in the course of these remarks. She struggled, it is true, to free her mind from such convictions,—manifested at times, decided opposition to religious truth,—and was as decidedly averse to all serious reflection. Still, there were seasons when she was greatly alarmed in view of her sins, and would betake herself to prayer for God's forgiveness. Then, indeed, she would listen attentively to the counsels of her friends, and would request an interest in their devout supplications. I am not aware, however, that such seasons were particularly noticed till two or three years before her death. During the winter of 1827-8, there was a degree of seriousness in the school of which she was a member, and she with others was induced to attend meetings for prayer and religious inquiry. Still there was no decisive change in her character, except that her

feelings were more tender, and her sensibilities more alive to her spiritual condition. From this period, it is believed, she accustomed herself, occasionally at least, to the duty of secret prayer.

At school she was usually industrious, and obedient, and made commendable progress in her various studies. To speak prudently, no one in her class was her superior in learning, and none would probably claim the distinction. From this, it will be concluded that she was prompt in her attendance, as well as quick to learn; for children, though bright, if they are inclined to be remiss, never attain to any considerable excellence. Yes, she evidently loved the place, and the employment, and this will chiefly account for her success.

All this would finally have availed her nothing, had she not made herself acquainted with that blessed volume which maketh wise unto salvation. The Bible became her most profitable study, and its precious precepts were treasured up in her retentive memory. At the same time, her mother had introduced a regular course of religious tuition, accompanied with



special prayer for the conversion of the child. The father too had become established at home ; so that Jane was privileged, till the close of life, with the hallowed influence of family worship. It was a sacred, a delightful scene, to witness the gathering of the domestic group, as father and mother, and sister, and brothers, read in succession from the holy Book, and bowed the knee together at the altar of devotion. Well do the surviving children remember, wherever rocking on the deep, with what importunity their case was presented at the throne of grace. Should they finally forsake the counsels of their father, and the instructions of their mother, (so far as accordant with divine truth) it will be hard contending with their consciences.

Let every child of pious parents commit to memory the words of Solomon :—*‘ My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother : Bind them continually upon thy heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee ; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee ; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp ; and the law*

*is light ; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.'*

The commandment of a father, and the law of a mother, are here supposed to be based upon the word of God ; so that their united cautions, and counsels, are to be received with the force of divine authority.

In addition to the privileges already mentioned, Jane was favored with the advantages of a Sabbath School, and stated ministry, which, however imperceptible at the time, were rapidly maturing her for another world. She was constant in her attendance on these means of improvement, and very rarely failed to be in her place at the proper time. This was owing, doubtless, in some good measure, to the *punctuality of her teacher*, who was always ready to meet her class as soon as the appointed hour arrived. Yes, and instruction was given as by one that must render an account unto God,—pleasant and cheerful, yet solemn and impressive in every exercise. It is not strange, that under such tuition she manifested an increasing interest in the delightful duties of the day of rest.

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Religious reading in general, but especially that which is adapted to the capacities of the young, began to engage her serious attention, and to occupy most of her leisure hours. The following anecdote may serve as an illustration. One cold winter evening, as the family were sitting around the fire, and by pleasant conversation rendering themselves mutually happy at home, the father proposed some presents to his children. Different things were offered, and after some remarks as to their relative value, the alternative was presented to each in turn. I need not say what others chose ; but never shall I forget with what animation this dear girl raised her countenance and her voice, as she decided in favor of the ‘ Youth’s Companion.’\* It was a wise decision ; (each child was the owner of a Bible before ; ) and from that period till her death, Jane was a delighted reader of the ‘ Companion.’ Probably, indeed, the sketches of early piety, and the persuasives to the same, which she found in these pages from week to week, contributed to deepen the conviction in her own case of the value of religion. Thus, in various

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\* A choice little Newspaper, published at Boston.



ways, there was 'line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little,' to incline her attention to the great concern.

As in other cases, however, the desirable result was not yet secured. Her heart was affected, but not renewed. All that friends could do, by books, and instruction, and persuasion, and prayer, left an important object still to be accomplished. There was needed, for the conversion of her soul, the quickening influences of the Holy Ghost. This is a principle which applies to all sinners, old or young. Human efforts, it is true, have their appropriate influence in winning souls to Christ, and should be diligently employed, with due reliance on the promises of God, and the power of his grace; but this is the secret of success, in the happiest measures to promote salvation, a consciousness that all is deficient, 'until the Spirit be poured from on high.' This it is which gives energy to exertion, and fervency to prayer, in the utmost faithfulness of Christians,—a *simple obedience*, which 'walks by faith and not by sight.' When such a spirit prevails to any considerable extent in society, the usual result is the awaken-

ing and conversion of souls. God does bless, and will continue to bless, the humble and earnest endeavors of his children. It is due to his honor, as well as the welfare of the church, that this should be recognized in every instance of early piety, no less than in more general notices of religious prosperity. If revivals are the work of God, inducing christians to activity, and sinners to comply with the overtures of grace, it is equally clear that every instance of a change of heart should be ascribed to the agency of the Holy Ghost. *‘Born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’* Every converted child even, is a stone in that vast spiritual edifice which Jehovah is rearing for his final temple, the head-stone whereof shall be brought forth with shoutings, crying, ‘Grace, grace unto it!’

We are brought now to a very important period in this humble narrative. When Jane was about twelve years old, there was unusual seriousness among the people at Dartmouth. The church there, as a body, had been for some time in a very languid condition. Iniquity abounded,

and the love of many had waxed cold. True, there was here and there a man of business, and a mother in Israel, who were engaged in religion, and enlarged in prayer; but the number of these was evidently small. Neighbor said not to neighbor, 'Know ye the Lord?' for general indifference was the spirit of the times. 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,' appeared for the honor of his cause, and the good of his chosen, to build up Zion. A few family altars, (for they were few indeed,) began to blaze with increasing fervor. Social meetings for the devotional exercises assumed the aspect of unwonted interest, attention, and solemnity. Many an evening circle for prayer told, in the numbers that convened, and in the sober stillness which reigned throughout the room, that God was present of a truth. It seemed for once like transacting business for eternity. In a word, the Sabbath, the Sanctuary, and the Sabbath School, with other appointed means of grace, bespoke a decided change in the moral feelings of that little community. Then was it that the sword of the Spirit was quick and powerful;

the declaration of divine truth, unadorned, and homely, found its way to the conscience, and by sovereign efficacy was thrust home upon the heart. Saints repented and rejoiced,—sinners trembled and submitted,—while heaven, doubtless, was made glad with the intelligence of new-born souls.

One occasion, in the course of these events, stands forth in remembrance peculiarly prominent. It was a day of fasting and prayer in view of the solemn scenes then transpiring. The assembly convened at nine o'clock in the morning, and continued without intermission, and without weariness apparently, till nearly four in the afternoon. The exercises were such, materially, as would be supposed to characterize such a season ; but the immediate effect, it seems to me, is altogether beyond description. A bare outline, therefore, is all that will be attempted in this brief sketch. Attending circumstances in general were favorable to the object. The time, and place, and providential assistance, all seemed to indicate that God in mercy gave countenance to the appointment. It was one of those mild days at the close of winter, which



anticipate the return of spring, and which open the mind to feelings of gratitude, as if by the inspiration of Nature herself. Though the place might seem little attractive to a stranger, it was otherwise to those who were acquainted with its history ; for it had been the scene of solemnities before. Could I transport you to the spot, it would be entirely useless without the aid of concurrent circumstances. You would need to feel the enlivening sea-breeze, and gaze upon the vast expanse of waters stretching away to the Elizabeth Islands, and to witness the still more joyful spectacle of a people gathering for social worship, yielding their voluntary homage to the God of nature and of grace.

The place of meeting was a large school-house, whose rustic tower overlooks the whole surrounding village, and is hailed by the homeward-bound mariner as a moral lighthouse on the shore of ' Apponaugusett,' and whose structure is hallowed in the memory of other days, as *a place where prayer was wont to be made.*

The house was filled at an early hour, and the services commenced at the time appointed. There was a general attendance on the part of

the church, as well as others of almost every variety of age and character. Yet throughout the assembly, various as it was, there was the utmost stillness, decorum, and attention; yea, every word, and every look conveyed the impression, 'Surely the Lord is in this place.' Confession and supplication, intermingled with praise, and offered (as is hoped) in the exercise of humble faith, and repentance, and submission, were the engrossing business of several hours. In connection with these, was the cordial interchange of sentiment and feeling among the people of God who were thus assembled. It was delightful to witness their freedom of speech and fervency of prayer. Christian brethren, one by one, made acknowledgement of their remissness one to another, and individually renewed their pledges to strive for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom. The very simplicity of their address attested its sincerity, and carried conviction to many bosoms, that the religion of Jesus is, in fact, matter of genuine experience and reality. As they spoke of each other's accountableness to God, of their indissoluble ties as members of the same family, and

their expectation of meeting at length in sweeter fellowship around the throne, it seemed as if each stubborn heart would melt and sympathize with these sentiments of Christian soberness and love. But when they addressed themselves explicitly to sinners, and entreated their acceptance of the great salvation, the effect was even more impressive ; it was as though the light of eternity were bursting upon their view, and as though the glories of heaven, or the miseries of hell, were depending on the immediate issue.

It should be added, moreover, that several ministers were present during the progress of the meeting, whose speech was ‘in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,’ and whose united labors seem not to have been bestowed in vain. Yet as their feelings would forbid, I forbear to particularize.

Nor did the protracted service tire on the minds of the assembly. A very few, indeed, retired before the close ; and they were such as left in consequence of imperious duty. The meeting manifestly increased in interest to the last ; and if there was a reluctant moment in which to leave the house, it was when we united

in the parting hymn. In accounting for the deep engagedness of the occasion, the reason is obvious ; it was sincerely believed, and generally believed, that the Spirit of the Lord was graciously present.

As to immediate results beyond what has been related, it is sufficient to say, that no method was adopted, then or since, to test the decisions of that particular season ; but it cannot be doubted that they will occupy a page, important to souls, on the records of eternity. This much, however, is evident, that the doings of that day had a decisive influence on the cause of Christ, and resulted in good to some precious souls. Nay more ; it is as certain that the consequences involved will affect the destiny of very many forever ; for the influence and the memory of such events will continue to extend beyond the circle of revolving years.

The salvation of souls had now become an important object in the estimation of the people. Christians assembled very frequently for prayer, while at the same time a meeting was held for the instruction of such as were inquiring the way



to Zion. These were hours of intense solitude. Moments seemed to be winged with the weight of years, though swift as thought in their rapid career. Life or death,—heaven or hell,—eternal pleasure or eternal pain,—appeared to be the pressing alternative. One sentiment pervaded the minds of all, that so far as themselves were concerned, the harvest was passing, and would soon be over. Yea, though retiring seasons have thrown their shadows between that period and this, and though essential changes meanwhile have been wrought in the condition of many who were thus collected, (some having gone to their final reckoning, and others ripened into hardy manhood,) I seem to behold the same circle of youthful inquirers, and to witness their successive sighs, and tears, and smiles, as joy preponderated above grief, while grace was triumphing over sin. Is it fancy ; or do I still hear the solemn cadence of the closing hymn, in which happy converts united their voices :

‘TO-DAY if ye will hear his voice,  
Now is the time to make your choice ;  
Say, will you to Mount Zion go ?  
Say, will you have this Christ, or no ?

Ye wandering souls, who find no rest,  
Say, will you be forever blest ?  
Will you be saved from sin and hell ?  
Will you with Christ in glory dwell ?

Come now, dear youth, for ruin bound,  
Obey the gospel's joyful sound ;  
Come, go with us, and you shall prove  
The joy of Christ's redeeming love.

Once more we ask you in his name,—  
For yet his love remains the same,—  
Say, will you to Mount Zion go ?  
Say, will you have this Christ, or no ?

Leave all your sports and glittering toys ;  
Come, share with us eternal joys ;  
Or must we leave you bound to hell,  
Then, dear young friends, a long farewell.'

Lest however, the foregoing description should convey to some minds an overrated estimate of the *number* converted, it is proper to guard the point by a brief suggestion. The estimated number of converts was not so large as to be rated by hundreds, or even by scores ; yet (blessed be God) it was sufficient to enlarge the little band of the faithful, and sensibly to increase the moral influence of that desolate region. It was, therefore, so far as men can

judge, a 'time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.' If one veteran in sin was led to leave the way of transgressors and enter the pleasant paths of peace,—if one frigid moralist was brought to see the fallacy of his hopes, and to build anew on the 'sure foundation,'—if one widowed mourner was induced to wipe away her tears and assume the garments of praise and salvation,—if one little group of promising youth were disposed to gather around the standard of the cross, in a public profession of their faith in Christ,—if some of these have already joined the church triumphant, and others have remained to witness additional triumphs of grace below,—it deserves to be recorded, yea, all to be ascribed 'to the praise of the glory of his grace.'

But we have lost sight of Jane in the general narrative, and must hasten to resume this part of the history. She was by no means an unaffected observer of the passing scene. Her soul seemed absorbed as in the very crisis of its probation; and others felt, as well as she, that amazing consequences were pending on the moment. She was a strict attendant on the meeting for inquiry, and manifested when there, a

mind alive to the great concern. There was no gazing around to gratify a vain curiosity as to who were present, and no eager listening to catch the whispered replies of others, who, like herself, were there to receive counsel adapted to their condition; but when remarks were addressed to her individually, or to the circle collectively, not a thought passed unnoticed, and not a word escaped her hearing. And, no marvel; for she was there in the character of a convicted sinner, conscious that her heart was estranged from God, and that her guilt subjected her to his just displeasure. It was enough therefore for her, in this critical condition, that she had a controversy to terminate with her Maker and Judge, and that the conflict was raging at fearful hazard. What should she do? The conditions of peace were plainly revealed, and could in no wise be altered; she must yield,—yield to mercy on its humble terms, or bow to Justice and abide the issue. Still her heart was unrelenting. Conscience was restless,—the understanding enlightened; but the will remained inflexibly rebellious. Yet here the matter could not rest. Something must be done, and done soon, was the prevalent impression.

Thus she came, from time to time, and with increased anxiety, to the place appointed, hoping doubtless, to find relief from something that might be said or done on her behalf. She was taught, however, in common with others, to renounce all reliance on human help, and, as the only refuge of peace and safety, to throw herself entirely upon the grace of God. That grace was held up to view as presented in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, and thus providing pardon for all the penitent. Repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ were the simple conditions urged upon her attention ; and these were enforced as matter of present obligation, and immediate hope.

How eloquent is the scene of the Cross. What persuasive arguments does it address to the understanding ; what pathetic appeals does it bring home upon the heart. To the convicted soul especially, what motive can be so overpowering as that which pleads in a Saviour's groans, and tears, and blood ? ' Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ! ' View the ' Man of sorrows ' enduring the last agonies of crucifixion, yielding up his own pre-



cious life, that guilty souls might be pardoned and saved ; and then decide, how base must be the spirit that does not yearn at the sight. Why, the very rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and the sun endured an unnatural eclipse, at this wondrous exhibition of grace ; and the crucifiers themselves exclaimed as they beheld it, ‘ Truly this was the Son of God ! ’ How hard then must be the heart which refuses submission to his just authority, which *does not love*, and will not repent.

But by the influences of the Holy Spirit some are induced to love the Saviour ; and it is usually in view of his sufferings on the Cross. This, it is believed, is true of her whose history we are now pursuing. At what particular time she experienced this change of feeling and affection, I am not authorized to determine. Nor am I aware, that at the period already described, she ever expressed a decided hope that her sins were forgiven. Still there are considerations which sustain the opinion that such was the fact. Her after life, it is evident, though not a course of unexceptionable seriousness, exhibited a change in her habits and pursuits, which it seems proper to

ascribe to renewing grace. Indeed, the more I review her history, and endeavor to analyze her character and conduct, the more I am convinced that she was the subject of gracious influences beyond what she was disposed to claim. Nor is this strange at all when we consider that she was acquainted with some instances of conversion where grace had to triumph over more inveterate opposition, and where the change, of course, was more distinct and visible.

Is it not often the case, that tender minds are too much inclined to estimate their own condition by the wonderful experience of others? If so, the error should be plainly exposed, and, so far as may be, counteracted. Every serious youth that is prone to the indulgence of such an error, should be taught to understand, that as to the matter of conversion, the question is not whether we have had precisely the same views and exercises as others; but, whether we really hate sin, and strive to avoid it,—or whether we sincerely love God and delight to obey him. Beyond this, it is of little consequence to agitate the inquiry whether we have been *born again*; let our cheerful obedience decide the question. Wonderful appearances, and transports of joy,

are not the test. These may, or may not have been experienced ; yet, aside from these, there is a simple and safer method of determining the subject. If our consciousness of remaining sin is indeed oppressive ; if our known feelings meanwhile bespeak an attachment to the Saviour's cause ; if our seasons of retired meditation and prayer attest the same, (however feebly ;) and if our desire is to be conformed entirely to the will of Christ ; then, surely, ' the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.'

There are cases however aside from those of distressing doubts and dark uncertainty, where the full influence of faith and hope is not exhibited till the final conflict. Such perhaps, was the case with this dear youth. From the period above mentioned, she appeared generally cheerful, obedient to her parents, affectionate to her brothers, agreeable to her young companions at school, and alternately more or less engaged in the duties of religion. Though she made no pretensions as yet to personal piety, there is still room for the supposition that a good work of grace was imperceptibly progressing in her soul. It is true that there were some indications to the



contrary ; for her sprightly temper would sometimes gain the ascendancy over her more serious inclinations, and expose her to conduct unbecoming a Christian.

For a time, her mother observes, ‘she seemed to have lost some of her interest, but never wished to excuse herself from any meeting, or from family worship. She was uniformly kind, pleasant and attentive. Many times when she wished to retire for the night earlier than the usual hour of prayer, she would whisper to me to request her father to attend prayers, that she might retire.’

Happy for her that she was thus careful of her religious privileges. Little did she anticipate how soon they were to be relinquished. May many children learn from her example, to appreciate the blessing of family prayer.

An incident in the history of this dear youth which made a deep impression at the time, and the notice of which may serve to enliven the narrative, will here be related precisely as it occurred. In the autumn of 1829, as I was walking leisurely upon the sea-shore, listening to the murmur of retiring waves, inhaling the freshness of the gentle breeze, and ruminating on the won-

ders of the ‘vasty deep,’ Jane had been tripping along before me, and left her name in the smooth surface of the sand. There it stood in large letters that could be read at a glance—JANE BAILEY.

As I paused at the spot, it was natural to reflect, how soon the returning tide would obliterate the harmless impression; but, little did I then imagine, that the name of one so valued, would soon in reality be blotted from the catalogue of the living. Yet thus it resulted. Yes, the hand that traced those letters in the sand, was ere long benumbed with the chill of death. A few short days, and she was in her grave.

I introduce this passing occurrence, not as having any special connection with her decease, (for the incident itself was perfectly natural,) but as conveying a distinct illustration of the uncertainty of life. In this view may it be regarded by every reader. Moralizing however on such events, it is timely to observe, that the very eye that reads this page may as suddenly be closed on the scenes of time.

As we draw towards the close of a narrative like this, it is natural to expect that the interest will rise with the progress of the subject. There

is a general feeling of disappointment if the closing scene does not furnish something full of sentiment and thrilling emotion. So much so is this the fact, that a biography would hardly be read, if there were a known omission of the final paragraph. In the history of the deceased, we wish to know not only how they have *lived*, but how they have *died*. To a certain extent, undoubtedly, this desire is both proper and commendable ; for the testimony of the dying is entitled to attention, and the death-bed is a scene of indescribable interest. Yet it is important so far to restrain this feeling as to avoid precipitance, and to proceed deliberately to the sober result. Much may be lost by being too eager to arrive at the end ; and the interest excited is likely to fail, if anticipation has supplied the remainder with its own bright imaginings. Fancy is but a blind revealer of facts ; and it is only when we resign ourselves to the sober guidance of reality, that we are likely to experience what we expected. It should be remembered continually, that it is a different thing to die, than merely to imagine the solemn event. There are views and feelings in the immediate prospect

of eternity which can be but poorly estimated at a distance, and which bid us pause with profound circumspection, as we listen to the testimony of impartial experience. The season of sickness and dissolution is that emphatically which tries men's souls. Few, comparatively, at any age, have gone down to the grave without some measure of alarming apprehensions. What, then, should we expect of one in the very morning of life, whose cheek was blushing as the rose, and whose every aspect betokened health; I say, what should we expect of such an one, when called at once to grapple with the 'king of terrors?' Is it strange at all that the first approach of death was unwelcome, or even terrific?

It will be seen however, that though this was the fact with Jane, she shortly became reconciled to the event, and finally departed in the very triumphs of faith.

Her last sickness was very brief, and decidedly severe. At first, it seemed attended with no particular danger, but it soon assumed a more formidable appearance. She, however, was the first to apprehend such a result. This was the

last Sabbath in November, 1829. In the evening, as her parents were sitting by her bed-side, and administering those attentions which her case required, she very unexpectedly exclaimed, 'Oh dear, mother, I don't know as ever I shall get well!'

On being asked, if she were willing to die? 'No;' she replied, 'I am not prepared.'

She was then asked, if she would like to see Mr. H. To this she replied very earnestly, 'Yes.'

I called, accordingly, on my return from meeting, and conversed with her as her condition seemed to require. She was evidently in the exercise of much bodily suffering, but was in deeper anxiety respecting her soul. The great question now, was not how to remove the pains of disease, but how to attain to everlasting rest.

Her desires seemed to flow into this as the absorbing channel, by what means to insure her peace with God. I said but little, however, as was deemed expedient, and left her to the care of those whose tenderness and fidelity none could doubt.

Her father was with her most of the time, conversing and praying at intervals, as seemed



desirable, and thus directing the mind of his dear daughter to the soul's last refuge, the sinner's Friend—'*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!*' Said he, 'My dear child, we will do all we can for your body, but you must look to Christ to save your soul.' Such was the manner of instruction throughout ; and when, at length, the clouds dispersed, and the sun shone forth, Christ was ALL, *and in all*, to her enraptured spirit.

But let us not anticipate.

Jane continued in deep distress, both of body and of mind, during the night referred to, and the following morning. Yet it is highly probable that the violence of her disorder was the means of aggravating her mental sufferings. Those who are familiar with the subject are well aware that there is an influence of this nature which may materially affect the condition of the mind. Although, therefore, the thought of dying, and appearing in the presence of a holy God, was sufficient to awaken the keenest sensibilities of her soul, it is presumed that her anxiety was in a measure heightened by the nature of her disease.

The last day of life, if this case be an example, is indeed a busy one. To arrange one's affairs for a journey from home, for a few short months, or weeks, or even days, is often attended with fatigue and perplexity ; but, to make final arrangements for that departure *whence there is no return*, is a business which requires more serious industry. Thus was it, emphatically, in the present instance. With all her concern for herself, Jane found time to feel interested for others, and to express that feeling with the utmost faithfulness. She seemed, indeed, to every observer, as one that was finishing her work with all possible despatch, as if fully persuaded that the time was short. Though her disorder (supposed to be the croup,) rendered it extremely difficult to speak, she was free to converse with all who came in, and would address them personally, and plainly, urging the duty of immediate preparation for a similar scene. It appeared well nigh an appeal from eternity. Each remark she uttered was attended by a glance of her speaking eye, that told the fervor of her zeal, and the depth of her sincerity. Ay, there was speech in her features, as well

as in her language ; and no one could resist the simple eloquence with which she spoke.

To a friend that came in to see her, she said, ‘ Cousin Nancy, are you prepared to die ? We must all die soon ; and if we are not prepared, it will be an awful day. Tell Cousin Ezra, *he* must prepare to die.’

During the forenoon of Monday, as intimated before, she continued in extreme distress, and was manifestly troubled at the prospect of dying. But in the afternoon, notwithstanding two physicians were present, administering most nauseating medicine, and applying leeches to her throat, she became decidedly tranquil and resigned. Her father went into her chamber and observed at once a surprising change in the expression of her countenance. It was no delusion. The dear girl had emerged from her doubts and fears, and was ready to adopt the sentiment of the Psalmist, *Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.*

She began immediately to express the peace she enjoyed, and desired that her brothers might be called into the room to receive the embrace

of their dying sister. With lingering pace, and downcast eyes, they entered the apartment. To their youthful spirits, as you will naturally imagine, it was a summons too sudden, and too sad, to be endured without a struggle. Nor is it strange, that as they came in, one after another, their countenances betrayed the anguish of their minds, and assumed the paleness of indescribable emotion. Several others, not members of the family, were present at the interview; yet all seemed to participate in the general sympathy. Not that it was a season of unmingled sadness; it was rather an occasion, in view of which, one may venture to say,

The chamber where the youthful saint expires,  
Though fraught with grief,  
And dark with Death's dull shadows,  
Is still refulgent with the light of heaven !

It was a scene, indeed, of no frequent occurrence; too impressive to be forgotten, and yet too full of interest to be adequately described. An imagination that could fully delineate attending circumstances, and give to each its relative importance, so that the whole conception would stand out to view in the distinctive features of

reality, would be a happy relief to such description. Yes, could I open the door of that sick room, and introduce you, as it were, to the very assemblage, you would doubtless exclaim, '*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*'

There was the beloved youth, bolstered up in her bed, with a countenance indicating the approach of death, and yet as expressive as life itself; and, apparently in the vigorous exercise of reason, addressing herself most affectionately to the weeping circle. There stood the father, whose weather-worn visage and whitened locks told of tempests and trials endured before, looking and listening with an overflowing heart, yet admiring the riches of infinite grace. There too was the mother, with sympathies awake to the finest feelings of humanity and religion, performing the last essential offices of love, and receiving in return, as cheerful tokens of gratitude and affection. And there were the brothers near by, trembling at the transactions of the solemn interview, and sobbing as they awaited the final *farewell*! Hardly less affected were the youthful friends who had come together at



Jane's request, to hear from her lips those lessons of soberness which the occasion indited.

While her strength remained, and her voice was still audible, no time was to be lost. She took Thomas, therefore, by the hand, and kissed him, and told him *he must be good, and love God, and remember to obey his father and mother.*

In the same manner, 'Dear Matthew, *you must love God; or you can never go where I am going.*'

'And there is my dear little brother Rowland;' she clasped him in her arms, and kissed him,—the only language he could understand.

'Oh, Sarah,' said she to an acquaintance present, 'We have been very foolish, but I beg of you be so no more. Oh, do prepare to die!'

To a very intimate friend she said, 'Mary, you must give your heart to Christ. It is the easiest thing in the world; only do it in sincerity!'

In the same brief and earnest manner did she converse with several of her young companions, persuading them by all means and without delay, to seek and secure *the one thing needful.*

These entreaties were accompanied with repeated assurances of her own happy condition, her trust in the Saviour for the pardon of all her sins, her confidence in his protection through death's dark valley, and the blissful expectation of soon enjoying his more immediate presence above. There seemed, in truth, but a thin partition between her and the eternal city. Her countenance glowed well nigh with celestial radiance as she spoke of the opening prospect before her. Her humility, and penitence, and faith, and hope, bespoke her readiness to depart and be with Christ. As though her happy spirit already heard the harps of the blest, and caught some glimpses of the upper temple, and was eager to wing itself away to everlasting rest, nothing could divert her from the delightful vision. When the idea of separation from her friends was suggested, as most likely to test her feelings in this respect, she readily replied, 'I shall meet my mother and dear little sister Jane, and Caroline Crocker, and you, mother, and dear father,—I shall meet you all in heaven.'

Her mother then definitely proposed the question, 'Jane, are you willing to go and leave your

dear father, and me, and dear little Rowland ?’

‘ Oh, yes ; I am going to be with Christ.’

Still, she was not insensible to friendly sympathy. Said she, ‘ Mother, give me one more kiss ; I have been sometimes cross to you—but I am sorry : ’—‘ Though,’ added the mother, ‘ I was never aware of it ; for she was uniformly pleasant and obedient, and always said, when I told her to do anything—“ Yes, ma’m, I will.” ’

It was not, then, from want of natural affection that she was willing to die ; not that she loved her friends *less*, but her Saviour *more*.

The interest which she manifested towards her physician also, may be quoted as an example of her self-possession, her attentiveness, and her respect. ‘ Mother, if I do n’t live till Dr. Reed comes, tell him *I died in peace*.’ When the doctor came, however, she was so much exhausted that she could not converse, and requested her mother to inform him accordingly. How desirable is it that *every* physician should be like Luke *the beloved*, skilled in the science of things divine, and a recorder of the triumphs of Christian faith.

One incident which should, in the order of time, have been noticed before, may not be untimely even here. With the impression that this was the last opportunity in which to receive any sentiments from Jane, for the benefit of others, I inquired if she had anything which she wished me to communicate to the Sabbath School. The suggestion seemed to inspire her with unusual animation, and she exclaimed distinctly and forcibly, ‘ *Oh, that Sabbath School is a blessed place !* ’ But her strength failed her, and nothing more was added. Yet as I recall the history of that solemn, pleasing scene, and remember the manner in which this sentiment was uttered, I deem this testimony of the dying youth worthy a place in the memory of my readers,—‘ *Oh, that Sabbath School is a blessed place !* ’

Little more remains to be said respecting the death-bed of this dear girl, except that she lingered a few brief hours, without a symptom of anxiety, and then secretly resigned her soul to God. When her father perceived that she was about breathing her last, he engaged in prayer, commending her departing spirit to him who gave it ; while she fastened her eyes upon him as long as life continued.

On the whole, it is not surprising that the mother should affirm, with unstudied emphasis, 'I can truly say, she was lovely in life, and still more lovely in death.'

How appropriate to such a scene is the language of that beautiful hymn, recording the 'Death of a Sister.'

'Tis finish'd ! the conflict is past,  
The heaven-born spirit is fled ;  
Her wish is accomplished at last,  
And now she's entombed with the dead.  
The months of affliction are o'er,  
The days and the nights of distress ;  
We see her in anguish no more,—  
She's gained her happy release.

No sickness, or sorrow, or pain,  
Shall ever disquiet her now ;  
For death to her spirit was gain,  
Since Christ was her life here below.  
Her soul has just taken its flight,  
To mansions of glory above,  
To mingle with spirits of light,  
And dwell in the kingdom of love.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then let us forbear to complain  
That she has departed our sight ;  
We soon shall behold her again,  
With new and redoubled delight !'



That this sentiment was experienced by the bereaved parents, I think there can be no reason to doubt. As I met the father the succeeding morning, it was difficult to determine, from aught that could be observed in his demeanor, whether grief or joy preponderated in his bosom. He felt most sensibly that he had sustained a loss, the influence of which would attend him through life ; but then, to think of the assurance, and the triumph, attending the momentous crisis, it was enough to elevate the soul above its sorrows, and assuage the most turbulent tide of grief.

Marvel not at this decisive expression. It was an occasion of unwonted interest, as many living witnesses are prepared to testify. Yes, a child happy, even joyful, on the very borders of the grave. I have seen the apprentice at his work-shop, hurrying to conclude the labors of the day, and hastening homeward to enjoy a New England thanksgiving ; I have seen children at school, elated with the thought of a coming vacation, and leaping for joy as the hour arrived to speed their departure for their own native dwelling ; I have seen the sailor boy returned from sea, springing on shore like the

bounding deer, and quickening his footsteps towards the threshold, as a mother's smile welcomed his presence at the door; but if I were to single out an example of joy pre-eminent, it should be that of the dying youth looking away to her Father's house on high, and rejoicing in a hope full of immortality.

For the convenience of many who wished to be present, the funeral of Jane was attended at the meeting-house. Most of the usual congregation were assembled. The subject of discourse on the occasion, was from Job 14: 1, 2. *'He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.'*

The brevity and the uncertainty of human life were so manifest in the spectacle directly in view, that no effort was requisite to adapt the sentiment to the impressive occasion. A flower of the field, yielding to the sweep of the mower's scythe, or the reaper's sickle, and shrivelling beneath a burning sun; and the shadow of a cloud, driven of the wind, and hastening over the verdant landscape, were significant emblems of what was passing before us. The language of the scene itself was scarcely

less audible, than if a voice from heaven had said, ‘Cry—all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth.’ Looks of tenderness, and tears of sympathy, expressed a response in every bosom, implying a practical conviction of the truth, that childhood and youth are vanity.

Within sight of the coffin which contained the remains of one so active and beautiful a few days previous, it is difficult to imagine a more affecting performance than the singing of the following dirge:—

‘When blooming youth is snatch’d away  
By death’s resistless hand,  
Our hearts the mournful tribute pay,  
Which pity must demand.

While pity prompts the rising sigh,  
Oh, may this truth, impress’d  
With awful power—I too must die—  
Sink deep in every breast.

Let this vain world engage no more;  
Behold the gaping tomb!  
It bids us seize the present hour,—  
To-morrow death may come.

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Oh let us fly, to Jesus fly,  
Whose powerful arm can save ;  
Then shall our hopes ascend on high,  
And triumph o'er the grave.'

When the exercises at the sanctuary were thus concluded, the mourners and friends, embracing many of the Sabbath School teachers and scholars, moved in due procession to the grave, and observed in silence the melancholy office of burying the dead.

Within the limits of the same sacred inclosure, are the graves of many a youth, and child, and infant,—yea, the memorials of many a collected household, small and great, reposing together. Each has its own appropriate designation, or remains undistinguished by even a name. But there is one green hillock which you may wish to recognize ; and I would not omit the simple description. Should you chance to visit the consecrated spot, overlooking a beautiful bay of the ocean, you will there discover a marble slab erected in memory of a mother and a sister, and by its side, a modest mound, secluding the relics of JANE BAILEY.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

On a review of the preceding narrative, some reflections suggest themselves as highly important.

1. How welcome may be the summons of death. Death has long been entitled the 'King of Terrors,' and no picture perhaps is more revolting, especially to the feelings of children, than the image of the destroyer with his cruel dart. There is, however, a more pleasing representation of the scene attending the dying saint. Instead of a haggard skeleton, reaching out his ghastly arms to receive the reluctant victim of his embrace, you behold an angel of light hovering over the pillow, and whispering accents of peace to the fainting spirit. And when that spirit is ready to depart, you see the wings of love extended to bear it upward and away from all its troubles. Well therefore may believers sing,—

' Welcome, sweet hour of full discharge,  
That sets our longing souls at large ;



Unbinds our chains, breaks up our cell,  
And gives us with our God to dwell.

To dwell with God, to feel his love,  
Is the full heaven enjoyed above ;  
And the sweet expectation now,  
Is the young dawn of heaven below.'

Yes, well may the youngest of Christ's disciples, when invited to his more immediate presence, exclaim with rapture as they rise, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

There are considerations, it is true, connected with the subject of dying, which, when viewed alone, may appear appalling. The idea of being deposited in the lonely grave, a prey to corruption, and food for worms, is by no means a very pleasant thought. The thought too of transferring relationship from time to eternity, of passing inspection at the tribunal of Heaven, and of receiving a sentence of unalterable and unutterable import, is truly awful, and naturally terrific. But if we may connect with these a humble hope of heaven, just anticipations of a glorious resurrection and a blissful immortality, why need there be such a horror of great darkness surrounding the tomb? To die, what is

it? To shake off these cumbrous clogs of clay, and assume the habit of pure spiritual existence. Why then should mortals turn pale at the thought? Why shrink and shiver as the rising curtain is about to disclose the living realities of eternity? Can there be any reasonable ground of fear, except that our peace is not made with God?

The worldling indeed may be expected to tremble. Having no hope, and without God in the world, he has nothing to sustain him in the hour of trial. Riches, and friends, and honors, and pleasures, are all impotent to the task of administering relief. They may ameliorate, perchance, the sufferings of the body, provide the softest couch, and the choicest balm, and the sweetest perfume, for the feeble frame and the aching head; but they cannot illuminate the valley of shadows, or pour one ray of peaceful day-light on the visions of futurity. To such, of course, the summons of death must be indescribably alarming. It is the knell to their nearest interest and dearest enjoyments; the dread farewell, to hope, and happiness, and heaven.

Yet there is no necessity for such fearful forebodings. Let the soul have seasonably secured its better portion, its proffered inheritance beyond the grave; and it may smile at the summons that calls it away. Ah, yes, dear reader, it is substantially so. By faith in Christ the very grave is despoiled of its victory, and death itself is divested of its sting. Yea, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory; thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’

2. How blessed is the memory of pious youth.

Multitudes have studied, and toiled for ages to leave behind them some memorial of their worth. In all the variety which fame or fashion has invented, they have striven to embalm their names in the memory of the living. The sage has written it in his most learned treatise; the statesman has recorded it in the annals of legislation; the warrior has inscribed it, in letters of blood, on his towering obelisk; and in various humbler methods, though as eager to succeed, others have sketched one general wish—‘Let me not be forgotten.’ Yet how many of these

have left no traces of distinction worthy of remembrance. How many have merited no other regard, than to be despised, or forgotten. How many have left such a stain of infamy upon their character, as makes even friendship shudder to lisp their name. The chronicles of the righteous, however, are all so many happy and honorable exceptions. 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. The memory of the just is blessed. The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.' Such, in general, is true of those who have lived and died in the exercise of faith. How blessed, therefore, is the memory of pious youth. If their pains have been relieved, and their spirits supported, under the pressure of disease and the agonies of dissolution, what a lustre does it shed upon this scene of sorrows, this vale of tears. What more can the afflicted parent desire, concerning his children that *are not*, than the pleasing evidence that they have gone to be forever with the Lord? How consoling is the thought, that our heavenly Father, out of pure compassion, has taken them to himself. Who would wish them back to earth? Who

would subject them to the accumulating cares and trials of a life like this, when God has graciously granted them release? Still may the recollection of their early piety, and their early triumph over sin and suffering, serve to chasten our grief, alleviate our trials, inspire our devotions, and thus quicken our diligence in the Redeemer's service. What a privilege is it to be a mourner, under circumstances like these! Is it natural to think of departed friends, and recall the slightest events of their history, and by frequent meditations to retain a kind of intimacy with the dead? how comfortable must it be to associate with their dying agonies the peaceful hope of immortality. What memorial have the great ones of the earth left in the possession of surviving relatives that can compare with this? What monument has wealth erected, or ambition reared, on its proudest pedestal, that is half so enviable as the simple inscription, 'Here lies a youthful disciple of Jesus.'

Seek you for honor? let it be in obedience to the commands of Christ. Seek you for glory? let it be in an abiding attachment to the cross. Seek you to associate with your name some



sweet savor of remembrance, when you are slumbering in the dust? insure it by a life of cheerful piety, and by following the footsteps of those whose end is peace.

3. How desirable, in every aspect, is early piety. A thing may properly be considered desirable, only so far as it tends to good. A thing, accordingly, may be desirable on some accounts, and yet not entirely. There is such a mixture of good and evil in many objects of human pursuit and human pleasure, that it is oftentimes difficult to determine what are desirable, and what are not. It is not so, however, with reference to religion. All its requirements are pure and delightful; all its tendencies are safe and happy. To be religious, is to secure the one thing needful, and that too at the surrender of nothing worthy of desire. In all respects, it is sincerely, 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.'

Nothing can give to youth or childhood such loveliness of character, and such sweetness of enjoyment, as are connected with the present pursuit of piety. It results from the very nature of the possession. As it consists in holiness, it

is desirable in itself, and as it conduces to happiness without exception, it is pre-eminently desirable. It is the only pleasure that has no poison ; the only sweet without a snare.

Yes, the favor of God is the worthiest possible object of pursuit. Even if we had to make a pilgrimage to the world's end, or give our body to be burned, in order to secure it, it were richly deserving it all. Since, therefore, no such sacrifices are demanded, and all that God requires is the willing homage of the heart, how cheerfully should the young make the offering of their earliest and best affections to him. 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' It is a reasonable demand ; and common gratitude would urge its propriety. He feels an interest in your condition which no other being has felt, or can feel. He has done that for you which no one else has done, or could do. In addition to the fact that he has given you existence, and crowned your life with unwearied kindness, there is a consideration of still higher moment, that he has given his Son to die for your redemption. Has he not a right, therefore, to demand of every youth, and every

child even, 'My son, give me thine heart.' Ought not every soul, then, to render this obedience without delay? Why wait another moment, while the grace of God is pleading to-day.

The promises and the providence of God are strong inducements to early piety. His wisdom has declared, 'I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.' No such promise is held out to the aged, and no such promise is made to those who are in middle life; but such promises are abundant in behalf of the young. You, who are conversant with the Bible, know this to be the fact. Every page you read seems to convey the impression, that the earlier you seek salvation, the easier is it to be obtained. The usual course of Providence, in this respect, carries with it the same conviction. By far the greater number of those who give evidence of conversion, appear to have been converted in early life. Observe the history of religious revivals, and see how large a proportion of the converts are of this description. How few of them are aged; how many of them are young. Yet all this is perfectly natural.

The heart is hardened by continuance in sin ; it becomes more and more callous by neglect, —yea, is petrified under the very droppings of the sanctuary. But, on the other hand, when persons are inclined to seek first the kingdom of God, and strive to enter in at the strait gate, there is no such hindrance to their becoming Christians. They have but to commit their way unto the Lord, and he will direct their steps. Let them listen to his own most gracious proposal, and their duty will be plain and pleasant entirely. ‘Read it, my young friends, and ponder over it, as addressed to you,— ‘Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ?’

It is evident, surely, that you need such a guide, and that it is an object worthy of your immediate attention.

Was it important to the Israelites, in their pilgrimage through the desert, to be guided so plainly by a pillar of cloud, and a pillar of fire, that by day and by night they might feel secure ? Thus is it with you. You are in the deep solitude of a wilderness. The track is so dubious, and your eye so dim, that you can hardly see

a step before you. It seems, indeed, a pathless wild ; so that turn which way you will, all is dark and dread uncertainty. The wild beast is there, and the fiery serpent, whose mingled howlings and hissings make you startle as at the touch of death. In vain you seek a shelter ; for each cavern is the habitation of these frightful forms, glaring and gaping, ready to devour. To aggravate the horrors of your condition, a blackening tempest lowers. The elements are all in wild commotion ; and while winds are rending the trees of the forest, and thunders are crashing over head, and vivid lightnings are gleaming around, you stand aghast, as one enveloped in the midnight of despair. But lo ! a heavenly voice is heard,—‘ Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall direct thy steps.’ Yea, more, ‘ a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.’ That man is Christ Jesus. That refuge is beneath his cross. His guidance and protection may both be secured, by an immediate and decisive espousal of his cause. Welcome, then, the tidings, and embrace the offer without delay.



' Let not conscience make you linger,  
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;  
All the fitness he requireth,  
Is to feel your need of him.  
This he gives you,—  
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.'

4. How salutary is the influence of family worship.

To this influence we are doubtless indebted for much that is interesting in *Juvenile Biography*. Without this, it were vain to expect many instances of conversion in childhood. How large a portion indeed of those who have experienced religion at a much later period of life, have traced back their first serious impressions to pious instruction received at home. Especially may it be said of such as have been distinguished Christians, that they were early accustomed to household prayer. Most of them, at least, have enjoyed the benefit either of a father's or a mother's prayers. In connection with these, they have felt of course, the weight of parental example and parental anxiety, which have left an impression too deep to be forgotten. Who can estimate the amount of this influence on the susceptibilities even of little children?

Who will say that this is not one of the chief causes, instrumentally, of perpetuating religion from age to age? What reason is there to doubt that it is an essential means of preserving the church from entire extinction? The assurance to Zion is perpetually the same, 'Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children.' It proceeds, in fact, on the supposition that the pious parent will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.

Beyond a doubt, the fidelity of parents has much to do with the salvation of their children. Were all the truth in the case more fully developed, we should be surprised perhaps to learn how much is depending on this single point. Much as has been said and written on the subject, this much is sure, that there is no danger of yielding it too serious importance.

Religious influence of a domestic character should be regarded as the groundwork of christian education. Give to infancy the alphabet of religion, and it will not be slow to advance in its higher principles. What though it be true, that a mightier than human agency is requisite

to complete the design, and save the soul? It is equally true in other efforts, and that too where we expect success. How do we ever expect to secure that increase which it is the pleasure and the prerogative of God to bestow, except in answer to confiding prayer? And where is such prayer likely to be offered, if there be no observance of family devotion?

No thanks to the prayerless parent, if, in the mercy of God, his children are converted. They may be saved, yet so as by fire, and themselves erect an altar for morning and evening sacrifice, notwithstanding the example that has been set before them. Happy were it for the world, if this rebuke were applicable to no professors of piety.

It is a serious question, however, whether here is not a main obstacle to the conversion of the young. Are there not some at least connected with the families of professed believers, who perceive such a discrepancy between acknowledging God at the communion table, and not acknowledging him at home, as thus to be prejudiced against religion itself? Heaven grant, that the time may soon have come, when

there shall be no occasion for such inquiries, and when all the children of the church shall be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; yea, when every household shall be a religious household, and every family a family of prayer.

Whatever may be pretended to the contrary, it is manifestly God's design that the doctrines and duties of religion should be rendered decidedly familiar, and thus far, attractive and agreeable.

This is his express command : 'Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.'

5. How precious is the cause of Sabbath Schools. Of their general utility, there seems at present but little doubt. Public sentiment seems to have subscribed to the opinion that this influence is vastly essential to the well-being of society, and that it is intimately connected with the salvation of souls. It is not enough however, merely to yield assent to so obvious a truth. Nor is it sufficient to believe that Sab-

bath Schools are likely to result, prospectively, in great good to those who are taught. This is undoubtedly the fact; but it is not so entirely. Much of the seed now sown may spring up and bear fruit hereafter; but if this is all that is expected, there must be a lack of faith, and a deficiency of effort. It needs to be felt universally, that the conversion of children is not only a desirable, but a practicable object, and that this should be the direct aim of every teacher. That such effort, with corresponding prayerfulness and perseverance, will secure the blessing of God, is as plain as his promise or his providence can make it. Every year, in its circular report, is bearing abundant testimony to this cheering conviction. Every revival speaks of Sabbath Scholars, and some of them very young, as among its first wholesome fruits. And where no special attention is observed among the people at large, many a faithful teacher discovers evidence of success, and thus sympathizes with the sentiment, that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.

Had we the records of immortality, it would doubtless be found that the cause of Sabbath



Schools is dearer to the redeemed than we have ever imagined. Based as it is upon the Saviour's precept, 'Feed my lambs,' and connected as it is with the advancement of his kingdom on earth, David would be willing to employ his harp, and Peter his zeal, and Paul his eloquence, to speed the enterprise. Yea, all heaven is alive to whatever contributes so directly to the conversion of the world. Nor is it presumptuous to imagine, that very many of its best inhabitants, while they ascribe salvation to God and the Lamb, acknowledge this as the instrumentality by which they were brought into the fold of the great Shepherd.

Sure it is, that not a few have left their dying testimony to this effect. 'That Sabbath School is a blessed place,' is a sentiment that has been uttered by more than one, and by more than one under similar circumstances, and in the same Sabbath School with Jane Bailey. Such an instance was ELIZA JANE BAKER, who died at Dartmouth, Dec. 16th, 1832, at the age of ten years and four months. When in health, a walk of nearly two miles, and that at times when the weather was severe, was performed very

cheerfully for the sake of the sanctuary and the Sabbath School. How often has she been seen leading her little sister over the bleak hills, and coming up with a smiling countenance to the house of God. How steadfastly has her piercing eye fastened upon the preacher, as he was unfolding the riches of divine grace ; and how attentively has she listened to her Sabbath School teacher in the succeeding exercises of the occasion. Dear girl—she has out-learned her minister and her teacher in the great mystery of godliness, and knows more of the Saviour than is taught below. Her faith is changed to sight, and her hope merged in joyful fruition.

Her last sickness was very brief and distressing ; but the particular circumstances need not be described. As the hour of death drew near, she bade adieu to her friends with much propriety, and with manifest composure. ‘ Father, farewell—Farewell mother, and brothers, and sister : ’ giving them at the same time, a strict charge to attend the Sabbath School. She remembered well, says the mother, the instructions which she had received there, and the consolations of the preached gospel. Hence she

was well prepared to recommend to her sister and brothers, attendance on these means of grace ; and to leave this as her last most affectionate advice.

The physician of the place was a favored observer of the happy frame of mind exhibited by this dying child. Others who were present were heard to remark, ‘that they should be willing to die, if their death could be like hers.’

A somewhat similar instance, and in the same neighborhood, was **GEORGE S. THACHER**, who died Feb. 3d, 1832, at the still earlier age of eight years.

George was a boy of very serious habits for several years previous to his death. Being naturally very studious and very inquisitive, he would sometimes propose inquiries about God and religion, that were extremely difficult. The inclination of his mind, (so to speak,) seemed to be pre-eminently towards this great subject. The Sabbath School Library, as well as its appointed lessons, contributed much to this result ; for it hardly need be said that he was a diligent attendant on these precious privileges. He would propose to his mother questions like these:

how he must pray—how much he must love God—and if God would forgive him all his sins. Circumstances in connection with these inquiries indicated that he was in the practice of secret prayer, at as early an age as five or six years.

During the sickness that terminated his life, he was remarkably patient and submissive, manifesting no disposition whatever to murmur at his sufferings. At the same time he appeared deeply sensible that he was a sinner, and needed God's forgiveness. He requested a number of his friends to pray with him, and when inquiry was made for what they should pray, he answered, 'that God would forgive him all his sins, and make him happy.'

When the physician told him that he had done all he could for him, and that he would probably live but a few hours, he asked him if he was willing to die, and leave his father and mother and brothers and sisters? At first, he replied that he did not know; but afterward said that he was. Being asked the same question a number of times, he would readily answer in the affirmative. He wished to have his brothers called that he might see them once

more before he died. When they came in, he urged them affectionately to pray to God every day, that he would forgive them all their sins, and enable them to live agreeably to his will. This is among the last circumstances recorded by the mother, who has the consolation to believe that her dear little George departed in peace. Though his delicate form is wasting away in its silent sepulchre, faith anticipates a glorious resurrection.

‘ Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,  
When what we now deplore  
Shall rise in full, immortal prime,  
And bloom to fade no more.’

Nor is it alone the testimony of the dying, that yields this revenue of praise to God through the medium of Sabbath Schools. There are living witnesses on every hand, attesting the efficacy of this means of instruction, and attaching to it an importance of unspeakable value. In this connection, therefore, it is but just to add, that most of the class with which Jane Bailey was connected, have since become, apparently, new creatures in Christ, and are actively engaged in Christian effort. All these



are but few of the many examples, which together teach how precious is the cause of Sabbath Schools.

6. How important is the institution of Home Missions.

The scenes described in the preceding pages are all within the limits of a feeble church sustained hitherto by the patronage of the Massachusetts Missionary Society. Without such patronage, the cause of religion in Dartmouth must inevitably have languished. The Sabbath would have been more grossly profaned, the Sanctuary more generally neglected, and the Sabbath School, if it survived the famine, would have been at best a sickly flock. The few hearty friends of the gospel were disposed to contribute liberally of their substance to its support; but their means were not abundant, and they needed the sympathy of their more favored brethren; a sympathy too that speaks in language louder than words. Their wants, in fact, were real and urgent. Their hands hung down, and their hearts fainted at the appalling prospect of being destitute of the bread of life. 'How can we live without the preached gospel?' was a ques-

tion proposed with many tears and prayers. What will become of the rising generation, if we have no one to guide their erring footsteps into the paths of peace?

But Heaven be praised; in this their extremity there was ready relief. The genius of Home Missions, the Alma Mater of feeble churches extended her hand, and proffered assistance. It was seemingly as life from the dead. Confidence was inspired, and energy was awakened, to strengthen the things that remained that were ready to die. The institutions of the gospel have thus been perpetuated, christians have been comforted, and sinners saved. Yes, some in heaven, and still more on earth, can most cheerfully testify their indebtedness to the influence of domestic missions. Children even, while passing through the valley of the shadow of death, have been heard to sing, 'Hosanna to the Son of David.'

Who, then, would not be a contributor to such a cause? Who would not be the almoner of such blessings to the needy? Who would not rejoice to believe that his own munificence, however humble, had contributed to cheer some one

of the many waste places of Zion? How can the rich invest their substance to better advantage? How can the poor obtain a life insurance for the benefit of the widow and the fatherless, more secure than this? How can the poor widow cast her two mites into the treasury of the Lord more safely or more successfully, than through this productive medium? How can the child that reads this question, dispose of his little earnings in a manner more gratifying to his good wishes, than by helping to support a Home Missionary?

In this way, other benevolent objects will be directly increased. The feeble will become strong; and having freely received, will be disposed the more freely to give, till the knowledge of salvation shall fill the earth.

If this narrative, and the subjoined remarks, shall tend in any measure to such a result, it is proper that the influence should be thus far subservient to the sacred cause of HOME MISSIONS.



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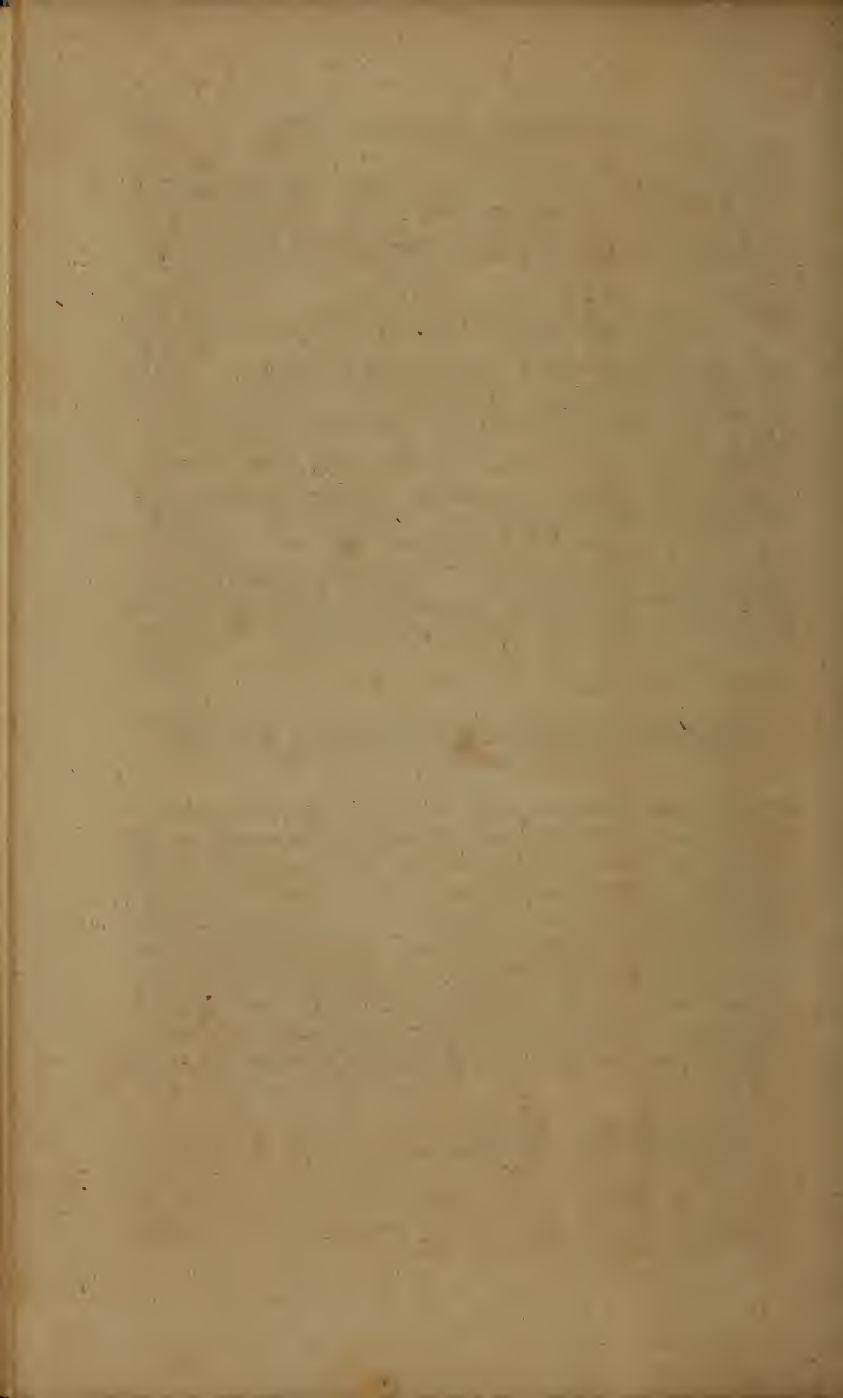
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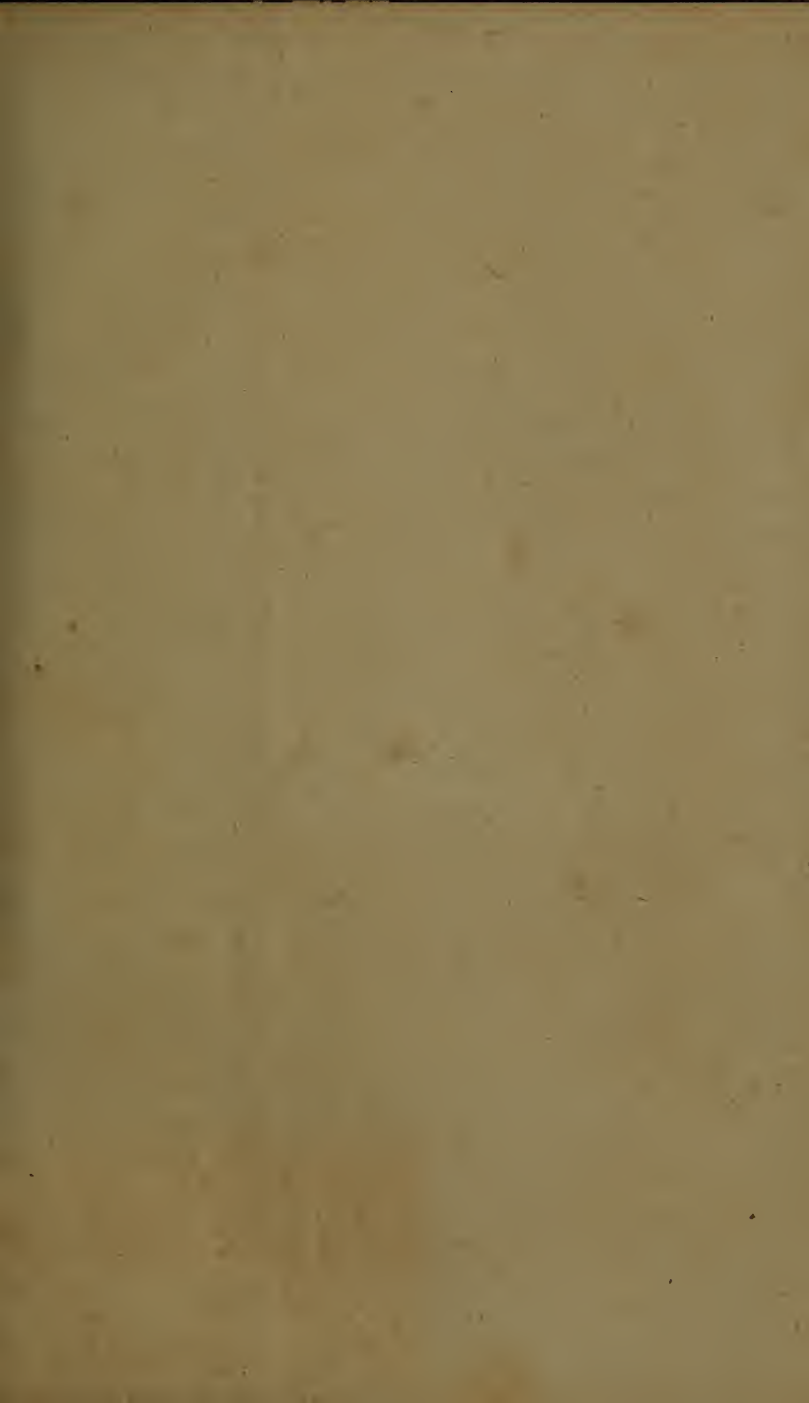
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